Vol. II. BOSTON, MARCH, 1889. No. 3.

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A WORD OF IMPORTANCE TO OUR READERS.

WE wish that every present subscriber to THE NEW IDEAL, and all others who see the paper, if they feel the periodical to be of value, would interest themselves in extending its circulation. And the friends of the paper should understand that it is not only desirable *but necessary* that this should be done. There is abundant place and need for the paper, but it cannot be continued indefinitely without a continuously increasing list of subscribers.

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THE NEW IDEAL

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VOL. II. BOSTON, MARCH, 1889. No. 3.

EDITORIAL.

"PREPARED."

I KNOW not why good men should say
That he who dreams a dream divine—
And seeks it, soulful—"does not *pray*"!
That he who still sees Beauty shine
Through all life's ill, and flowers entwine
With solar glow to hide earth's gray,
Is drunk with "irreligious" wine—
Because he does not "pray"!

Nor know I why good men should sigh,
Deeming him far from good and "God,"
Who yet in darkness hears Love's cry,—
In lambent orb and lowliest sod
Progressive Purpose can descry,
A Presence broad and deep and high
Finding alike in soul and clod,—
A "very present" God!

I know not why good men have sought
To speak him "Christless" who yet goes
In paths the Galilean taught,—
Seeking what he his neighbor owes,
Striving poor lives with misery fraught
To heal of something of their woes. . . .
"But ah! he cries not 'Lord'—and ought!
This man of 'Christless' thought!"

Well! o'er him flushes golden sky!
Better than night he loves the day.
He *dwells* in the "divine," say I.
And oh, he has no need to pray—
More than his want is the supply! . . . .
So, "doing the Will" and "knowing the Way"
He standeth needy world-souls nigh,—
"Prepared" to live or die.

JAMES H. WEST.

GENERAL TOPICS.

WHAT SHALL LIBERALS DO WITH THEIR CHILDREN?

OUR word on this topic, in the February number, has created no little interest in many quarters. Several articles in the present issue treat the subject, from varying standpoints,—and other similar articles are to come. All will bear study.

SUNDAY LAWS IN CALIFORNIA.

THE Sunday question is up at present on the Pacific coast. Evangelical religion — not "Capital," this time — is organizing to "enslave the masses." It may be that, before many years, the masses will organize to enslave Evangelical religion.

THE IMPORTANT WORD.

OUR readers will not fail to notice, on the first page, the call there made on them. "The important word" at present, in connection with THE NEW IDEAL, is not the great *Work* it might do, and is doing; nor the character and ability of its *Contributors*. These things are assured. "The important word" is — *Subscriptions*.

THE PHILADELPHIA ETHICAL CONVENTION.

TOO LATE to be crowded into the present issue by any possibility of contraction in our already overflowing contents, comes a fine report from Mr. Traubel of the proceedings at the late Ethical Convention in Philadelphia. We were hoping for the article earlier. But the influence of such a convention is permanent — its value, and the value of the report, will well hold over till some succeeding issue.

TRUTH-SEEKING.

IF THE NEW IDEAL is not right it wishes to be put right. It is truth-seeking; it hopes to be increasingly truth-*finding*. It is not published for the sake of propagating any single person's ideas; it furnishes a desirable and needed medium through which all who think great thoughts and hope great things may have opportunity (so far as space permits) to speak a helping, constructive word. It is reaching out after *Life*.

MR. POTTER'S HISTORICAL PAMPHLET.

IN our next number we expect to quote a few of the many suggestive and forceful things in Mr. Potter's admirable work just issued,—"The First Congregational Society in New Bedford, Massachusetts: *Its History as Illustrative of Ecclesiastical Evolution.*" In this thick pamphlet of 150 pages — the record of two hundred and fifty years and a prophecy for two hundred and fifty centuries — are contained many facts and hints, as to the past and future of Liberal Religion, that deserve wide notice.

"THE CENTURY OF FOREIGN MISSIONS."

The Church of To-day, an evangelical church-sheet teaching the teachings of the church of a thousand years before yesterday, says within a week or two: "As God notches the centuries, the chief glory of this nineteenth one is not that it has produced steam-engines and telegraphs and telephones and other mechanical marvels, but that it is *the century of foreign missions.*" The grandest thing of which the nineteenth century has to boast is that during it the Christian church has, at inordinate expense, carried the "good news" of the eternal damnation of all their ancestors to certain thousands of innocently happy "heathen," who, under Buddhism or Mohammedanism, or even utter paganism, are generally, as is now proved by statistics, much more moral and civilized than Christian Rum and Religion leave them after a year or so of "missions."

COSMIAN IDEALS.

SPEAKING, a Sunday or two since, before the Cosmian Society at Florence, we found the young people's Sunday classes joining in the repeating of these "Ideals." The paragraphs, we doubt not, will have interest for many:

Let us first repeat together all the meanings of the word COSMIAN:—

Order; good order; good behavior; government; an ornament; an honor; credit; a ruler, regulator; the world, or universe (from its perfect arrangement); the heavenly bodies as members of the universe; the earth; inhabitants of the earth; mankind.

We wish to advance in truth and goodness.

We will strive to promote general intelligence, good morals, and liberal religious sentiments.

We respect in each other, and in all, the right of the intellect and conscience to be free.

We hold it to be the duty of every one to keep his mind and heart at all times open to receive the truth and follow its guidance.

We do not aim to produce unity of belief, but unity of purpose to seek and accept the right and true, and an honest aim and effort to make these the rule of life.

We recognize the brotherhood of the human race and the equality of human rights.

"Independence and cheerful relation, these are the essentials, and the wish to serve, to add somewhat to the well-being of men."

"And ye shall succor men;
'Tis nobleness to serve;
Help them who cannot help again:
Beware from right to swerve."

BIBLICAL WALNUT-MEATS AND SHELLS.

From a manuscript temporarily in our possession, by our esteemed contributor, Perry Marshall, we cannot forbear to abstract these words on "selective" reading of the Bible: "It is said that Liberals throw away the Bible. When you crack walnuts for children who know enough to pick out the meats and leave the shells, do you insist that they have thrown away their walnuts? When you order mutton-chop, does the butcher or cook insist that if you do not eat bones and horns and wool and hoofs you have thrown away your mutton? The Bible has its tenderloin, and it has its bones and horns." With a more general candid appreciation among men of superior and inferior in the Bible, after the style of recognition suggested by Mr. Marshall, an expurgated edition of the book would undoubtedly be of large benefit to the growing generation. Its legendary and poetical character recognized, the Bible, as a book of vivid ethical illustration, might not be surpassed.

THE INFINITUDE OF AGNOSTICISM!

If all the able Liberal writers and leaders, literally "from Maine to Texas," who have, within a few weeks, sent us articles for, across, against, on, over, around, below, athwart and above "Agnosticism,"—called out by Dr. Abbot's article in our January issue,—and there are reams, almost, of manuscripts, long, short, rolled, folded, flat, single and on both sides, now on our desk, tables and floor, treating this matter,—so many of them, in fact, that we flounder among them with this paragraph and have utterly lost our way—but this is what we are wishing to remark: if all the able writers who have recently sent us articles on Dr. Abbot and "Agnosticism" fail to find them in this issue of The New Ideal, and shall fail again in the issues for April and May and other months in turn, it will not be, perhaps, because they do not all deserve printing; nor because we doubt of the utility of the discussion: it will simply be because our pages are finite, while the Agnosticism of our contributors is infinite!

THE BROOKLYN EVOLUTION ESSAYS.

Three numbers of this important series are now ready for delivery. The first, "Herbert Spencer," was spoken of in our last. The second, "Charles Robert Darwin," by John W. Chadwick, is as admirable in the way of condensed biography and discriminating analysis as anything we know in the same line,—and to say it is in Mr. Chadwick's best literary style is to say much. In this essay, as in the case of Mr. Thompson's "Spencer," there is presented just what thousands are wishing to have in precisely this form. The third lecture, "Solar and Planetary Evolution,"—how suns and worlds come into being,—by Mr. Garrett P. Serviss, author of "Astronomy with an Opera Glass," is as complete and popular a setting forth of the "Nebular Hypothesis," in connection with the development of the universe, as may anywhere be had. The pamphlet is *fully and finely illustrated*, and the keen "Discussion," by notable and competent critics, printed at the close of the essay, adds greatly to the value and clearness of the setting forth. The more we see of these lectures, the more we feel that they are to be highly serviceable and popular. Crowded houses attend their delivery, and they need only to be better known to command, in their printed form, a wide reception.

IN OUR NEXT ISSUE.

Among the contributors to our April number (if there is room for them all), the manuscripts being already on our table, we may name Mrs. Underwood ("The Philosophical Spirit vs. Egotism"), Dr. Edmund Montgomery ("Has Morality an Evolutional or an Eternal Basis?"), Mr. Frothingham ("A Word about Agnosticism"), Perry Marshall ("Jesus' Idea of Prayer"), Dr. Abbot (the second paper in his series, "The Philosophy of Free Religion"), Mr. A. N. Adams ("A Study of Religion and Science"), Mr. Holland (the conclusion of "Lucifer's Umbrella"), Mrs. Robert C. Adams ("Children's Sundays"), Mrs. Clara M. Bisbee ("Freethought and Ethics"), Chas. D. B. Mills ("Agnosticism and Liberal Thought");—while Capt. Robt. C. Adams ("Is anything the Matter with Liberalism?"), Mr. Wm. J. Potter, Mr. Horace L. Traubel, and a dozen other admirable helpers, all stand ready and waiting to give of their best. It is fortunate that we said "If there is room for them all"! No wonder that in the present issue, just before going to press, the editor was obliged to withhold his own "long" editorial altogether. What our readers should do is to help us make the paper a fortnightly. It could do a magnificent work. Its character is assured, and as a fortnightly, with its obvious high tone and fine endeavor, it would penetrate into quarters where it would Be of Help, and where it would meet the recognition it merits.

"THE NAME GOD."

The book-review in our January number, in which we deprecated the further misuse by Liberals of the word "God," calls out from the editor of the *Unitarian Review* (February number) a painstaking, scholarly article, wherein,—portions of our review being used for a text,—some of the things which our note had room only to outline are illustrated at length; whereupon Mr. Allen continues: "There are a great many things, then, in which our common sense of fitness entirely accords with the suggestion, which at first sight seemed such a startling one, that the name God should be disused in our ordinary vocabulary." The editor concludes, however,—turning from "the proprieties of speech" to the concernment of "the objective reality of that to which our emotions or thoughts refer,"—that "there are quite as many other things, in which that disuse is forbidden by all that is best in us." The need of the emotional nature, Mr. Allen argues, demands the word, and the idea in the word: "the need is of the heart and soul, which cry out for the Living God." Never mind if the intellect is not satisfied; "quite beyond our province" is it to try to "reconcile in our thought the conflict, the mystery, the guilt and pain, that make part of all the life we see." "We want to *feel*." That is the editor's plea. And his further words are: "We want to feel still free to use a Name which, in its original sense, expressed the faith of the heart, that the soul of the universe is good; that the Law, which looks so often bleak and cruel, *which is at best so perplexed and tangled* in its working, is yet 'holy and just and good,' because of the Soul behind it all." An almighty and all-good deity, whose Law "looks so often bleak and cruel," and "which is at best so perplexed and tangled"! "Poor God, with nobody to help him!" Good reason then, if this be so, and if in the beginning Good was God, that to-day we should revert once more to Good, and let the word "God," and the accumulated popular misunderstanding and distortion of the idea behind the word, go their own way. We need a less "damaged" word,—yes, and a less "perplexed and tangled" deity! We are open to conviction, but, until some further number of the *Unitarian Review*, we think we shall still have to adhere to our January word.

ESSAY.

For *The New Ideal.*

THE PAPACY.

BY HON. GEORGE F. TALBOT.

When an organism can no longer adjust itself to the conditions of an ever-changing environment, it must die. Christianity as a saving, educating, civilizing influence has had a splendid career during the last nineteen centuries; its salutary power, its vital energies are by no means exhausted; but tokens of its dissolution are everywhere at hand. If, like older and inferior forms of religion, its fate is to perish,

leaving as its only monuments the venerable temples that are to outlive the worship they were built to celebrate, and for its only records, the noble literature which it inspired and purified, it will be, not so much because its vitality was expended, as because it miscarried in an attempt to adapt itself to the new exigencies of the new age.

The discouraging, the dangerous symtoms of its decline are a certain callosity of dogma, that will not take any impression from an enlarged knowledge — a stiffness of articulation that makes it halt, and in halting hinders the beneficent movement of society. Its kingdom of heaven, thought to be at hand two thousand years ago, refuses to come. All the cardinal evils of human life keep their old places, and claim their annual heavy toll of victims. The peace on earth and good will among men are as far off as ever.

If, however helpless to save a wicked world, abandoned to sin and suffering, it plucked a remnant like brands from the general burning, how beneficial, how divine were its office! But does it? It still makes its enormous claim — there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby they must be saved. But *does* it save by its only name? Do those who accept it, who take upon themselves its vows and its service, become pure, peaceable, self-denying, just, magnanimous, cheerful, benevolent, affectionate? More and more, devils are cast out by men that do not name the name of Jesus. More and more, secular society and civil government — the great outside, unchurched world — take up and worthily accomplish the task assigned to the church of alleviating and curing the evil and misery of the time. More and more, clean, upright and noble lives are lived by men and women that have ceased to hold the faith, or practise the rites, or cherish the hopes of conventional Christianity.

These facts, obvious to the intelligence of the clear-sighted, are unmistakable indications that the helpful, uplifting influences of Christianity are approaching their exhaustion. Christianity must succumb to the fate of all organisms; and as it has had its period of growth, vigor and effective work, it must enter into its season of maturity, rest and death. There is nothing discouraging in the contemplation of the inevitable catastrophe. The channels of life are always full. Death may transfer the theatre of the activity of life: it cannot arrest or abate that activity. If Christianity is to pale, like the morning stars, it will be in the broadening light of a brighter day. The Son of Man will never come into a world that has lost faith.

But now the question propounds itself: needs must the change of cult — a process so helpful to humanity in the long run — be accomplished by the old methods of destruction and revolution? Such has been the law hitherto. What clear perceptions of virtuous conduct, what noble ideals expressed in a perfected art, what just sentiments of rectitude and mutual obligation embodied in decent customs and rigid laws, what sweet and pure domesticities clustering around the chastely kept marital and parental relations, were inextricably bound up with the rites and worship of the Olympian gods! What wonder that to the pious pagan sages and philosophers the driving out of the old deities from hearth and shrine with contemptuous obloquy and disparagement seemed to be the repudiation of religion and the perilous exposure of all those ethical sentiments that had clustered around the old faith?

The misery and danger of the crisis were as clearly seen by those who were charged with the new spirit as by those who held reverently by the old form. Think not, said Jesus, that I am come to send peace on the earth; I came not to send peace, but a sword. And the calamity apprehended from both sides actually befell. The change of cult from Paganism to Christianism cost the world the Dark Ages — an eclipse of civilization for five hundred years.

Is this not paying too dear for a good thing? Would it not be wiser for the new faith to abate a little the assurance of its infallible efficacy? We distrust the much-vaunted remedies that are a specific for all forms of disease. Instead of announcing that all who came before were thieves and robbers, were it not wiser to recognize the fact that the true light shone dimly in the minds of old prophets? Instead of asserting, as did Paul, that up to his time God had *winked* at the sins of humanity, to which he was as indifferent as to their sufferings, were it not a more comprehensive vision when the same Paul perceived that in all ages "God had kept a witness of himself" in human souls, and that who had not the law were a law unto themselves?

In fine, why should not one cult glide into another by an imperceptible change and growth — first the blade, and then the ear, and then the full corn in the ear? Why should not the controlling sentiments of duty, of rectitude, of justice, of beneficial service be kept tense and strong with the assurance that they have never been repealed or suspended or relaxed, and that they were the substance and vital force of all the religions that preceded Christianity, so that there is a historic nexus that makes one revelation of all the religious training of man?

It will be due to the obstinacy and hardness of the human heart if the new order must be introduced in the old way, by persecution, martyrdoms, punishments, and harvests reaped by the sword. The end of slavery in the United States came by suffering, sacrifice, and a cruel fratricidal war; but it might have come by the growing sentiment of justice gradually embodying itself in laws of emancipation. The cruel way was taken, because the American people refused to see and enter upon the merciful and benign way.

To me it looks as if Christianity was not to be destroyed as an enemy and hindrance to the new Messiah, but to be reformed and enlightened so as to recognize and welcome him. I know this will reverse the experience of the past. He came unto his own and his own received him not. "Seeing ye put the word of God from you, and judge yourselves unworthy of everlasting life, lo, we turn to the Gentiles." But note on the other hand how all the adventitious elements of Christianity — its incredible mythology, the arrogance and exclusiveness of its claim to be the sole remedy for all the evils of the world, its sacrificial and Messianic functions, its scheme of a kingdom of heaven, the terror of its day of judgment, and the unthinkable doom with which it threatens the race of man, called in grim irony its *good news* or gospel — are falling away day by day. Then note how that which is not so much the distinction and sole possession of Christianity as the valuable and at the same time common factor which links it on the one hand with earlier revelations, and on the other hand makes it an element in the culture of the coming race, — its ethical system, — enlarges more and more in the estimation of all good men. It only needs for this process — never so rapid as now — to go on, to make this old-world religion, which is the new, pass imperceptibly into the sunshine of the new dispensation.

What is lacking in the Christianism of this age to give it the prestige, the vital power as an instrument of civilization, which it had in Europe, let us say, in the 13th century? Mainly these three things — unity, organization, authority. It is broken up into an ever increasing number of hostile sects. The only part of its primitive spirit they have each been careful to keep — like a perpetuated ancestral malformation — is the assured confidence that it only has the true faith. So far from there being any effective co-operation in good works among these competing sectaries, each of them would prefer irreligion itself to the form of religion deemed essential by its fellow Christians. The impenitent worldling may be converted and saved; the false believer is doomed to self-deception and damnation.

Then there is no efficient organization of the ideas and sentiments of Christianity as a whole. The sects have systems of organization, as such, which perhaps are admirably adapted for the propagandism of their respective creeds and forms, but as admirably adapted to repel the sympathy and

assistance of the adherents of other sects. They are always ready to hold up their peculiar and obnoxious dogma to repel the fellowship of some member of "the little church around the corner."

When this Christianism speaks to the State, to societies, associations, ranks, orders or professions of men,—if indeed it ever dares to speak; if it does not take a servile and cringing attitude before organizations confessedly so much more vital and genuine than itself,—it but utters the voice of some great general synod or conference of the Presbyterian or Methodist church North or South. There is no *Amen* from the Baptists, the Universalists, the Episcopalians.

The late Dr. Albert Barnes once said that it rested with the Christians of the United States to put an end to American slavery. The Christians of the United States did not want slavery put an end to. There were whole synagogues and churches of them that believed it to be a divine institution. So the Christians of the United States might have prevented, might any year have arrested, our great civil war. But the Christians of the United States were rebels and loyalists. The prayers to the god of battles were as fervent, as frequent, as sincere, that the Union might be broken, as that it might be restored and preserved. There was even a suspicion that the Christians of the South, who prayed as fiercely as they fought, had this good understanding with the hearer of prayers, that they were less infected with damning heresies than their Northern brethren.

Now, what would give Christianity a new lease of life? avert from it the catastrophe which scientific rationalism seems to be preparing to precipitate upon it? make it a fitting matrix and cradle in which the Messiah of the universal hope may be born and reared, and put and keep it in the van of the onward movement of a beneficent civilization?

Suppose that *this* should happen: The cardinals of the Romish church, in utter unconsciousness of what they do, confer the papacy upon a great and enlightened man fully charged with the modern spirit, whose ambition it should be to unite in one effective, harmonious, universal and thoroughly spiritual organization the scattered forces of Christendom. Such union would be only possible upon some common ground of universal faith, and that ground is the moral law impressed upon the general conscience. Its basis would otherwise be the utter freedom of every man to believe what seemed to him to be true; and right thinking, or *orthodoxy*, would be considered the fidelity of every mind to its convictions however eccentric. The atheist, the man who held that the sentiment of duty, to which he maintained unfaltering allegiance, was an influence within him rather than a fashion imposed upon him from the outside by a person or persons, should find recognition and sympathy in this large association.

No more persecutions nor burnings; no more bulls against the discoveries of scientists, or the conclusions which logic deduces from the facts of nature. No more *index expurgatorius*: no more putting out the lights of knowledge; but every fact studied for its moral lesson, for the hidden "word of God" it is inarticulate to utter.

Positively, the pope of the restored papacy becomes the embodied conscience of Christendom. It is his office to give expression, and the emphasis of his personal sanctity and wisdom, to the just, the generous, the aspiring sentiments of the human race. In the plenitude and grandeur of his spiritual power, in the large jurisdiction gladly and freely given to him—the empire of the soul—he will no longer regret, or intrigue to regain, the petty political sovereignty he has lost. He will not compete with crafty courts in diplomatic artifices, nor seek to support his dignity with a squad of half-armed, fantastically clad soldiers, which the pettiest power in Europe could capture and confine in a guard-house without firing a shot. Strong only in his rectitude, strong in the spontaneous support and sympathy of good men all over the world, what might not such a pope do?

How long could such a system of despotism and terrorism as the Czar maintains live against the protest of the good pope when that protest shall express the indignation of the civilized world? How long could slavery flourish anywhere against his august disapprobation? Passing from camp to camp, where the great powers of Europe lie in wait to fall upon each other in the mutual massacre of the peaceable peasants whom they have kidnapped from home and beneficent industry to be their *cats-paws* to throw into the flames of war, could he not persuade, even coerce them into disarmment?

In such noble offices, how could even radicals withhold from the Holy Father their affection and their allegiance? and how cheerfully they would conform to his ritual of worship, made as catholic as their faith, and support with their obedience and free offerings his beneficent ambitions.

GENERAL CONTRIBUTIONS.

THEORY AND CONDUCT.

Dr. Abbot, speaking of agnosticism and the consequences of accepting it, insists on its "intolerable anguish," especially "in the constant presence of pain and death," and suggests, as its only palliative, "the desperate resolve to think and feel no more, but to extinguish all deep thought and all high feeling through frantic absorption in the soulless details of life." This is doubtless true in his case, as it is in the case of many intense, high-strung, fervent, passionate souls; as it was with Theodore Parker, who in a discourse on Immortality gave an awful picture of the fate of men if they should come to disbelieve in God and a future life; as it was with the late Edmund Gowney, who had no mercy on those who spoke of the beauty and glory of the present world in comparison with the power of an endless life; as it was with "Physicus," the writer of a book on "Theism," who declared, "I am not ashamed to confess that with this virtual negation of God the universe to me has lost its soul of loveliness; and although from henceforth the precept to 'work while it is day' will doubtless gain an intensified force, from the terribly intensified meaning of the words that 'the night cometh when no man can work,' yet when at times I think, as think at times I must, of the appalling contrast between the hallowed glory of that creed which once was mine, and the lonely mystery of existence as now I find it,—at such times I shall ever feel it impossible to avoid the sharpest pangs of which my nature is susceptible."

But such a feeling, though entirely genuine, is by no means universal, or general even, amongst cultivated and earnest men. I met, last summer, in Munich, a man who was once a professor of chemistry at Columbia College, New York,—an alert, bright-minded, philanthropic, hopeful man. He was an agnostic of the extreme description which Dr. Abbot depicts; yet he had no words to express his joy in the new idea. He exulted in it. The doctrine seemed to him a doctrine of emancipation; a doctrine that gave freedom to all his powers, and enabled him to do full justice to this world.

It is an old complaint that the multitude of men, though holding high opinions, are little affected by them in their natural dispositions. They are good men, honest, truthful, ambitious, kindly, humane, affectionate, but they do not, apparently, live under the influence of high thoughts. For my own part I sincerely regret the practical indifference of mankind to great spiritual faiths, and have been in the habit of accounting for it, in part, by the distance between the speculative beliefs and the living nature,—a distance that renders it simply impossible for the nature to absorb the beliefs. I am, myself, deeply persuaded that a faith in God,—the name we give to the principle of Unity, Purpose, Tendency, Righteousness, Goodness, Beauty, in the

world,—and a faith in the Eternal Life, are of immense value to mankind; but I am also persuaded that these saving ideas must be so interpreted as to make part of the working mind of men; must be hitched on, as it were, to current beliefs; brought within men's length of actual intelligence.

The difference of view in regard to the moral results of Agnosticism, for example, may be, in great measure, due to temperament. That it is largely a matter of education is certain. The Roman Catholic type of character is one; the Protestant type is another. That of the Calvinist does not accord with that of the Unitarian. There are people who think that the flame of morality will cease to burn if the fires of Hell are damped down. Some years ago I was walking through the gallery of the Capitol in Rome with a companion who was intensely orthodox, and had been so from his youth. As we passed by one of the statues representing a coarse, bloated, sensual man, he said, "There, now, is a typical transcendentalist." I made no reply, being familiar with his prejudice, but thought secretly of Emerson, Alcott, and the many transcendentalists I knew, who were heroes and saints, and who owed their character to the very principle he considered so fatal. Fortunately, human nature is human nature still, and will assert itself in spite of logical definitions.

But human nature is bruised, twisted, dwarfed, tortured, when the theory of religion is out of sympathy with it or too far away from it. Happy then if it can find a refuge in callousness or apathy!

Better by far would it be that all the possibilities of human nature should be drawn out;—and that would probably show itself the best philosophy which should stimulate the mind, inspire the will, fire the conscience. All honor to those who can construct such a philosophy; who, upon the known facts of the world, can rear a structure which the whole man can live happily in, with air and sunlight, and grace of form, and room enough for expansion, and windows that command the sky. Of them we can say what Wordsworth says of the poets:

> "Blessings be with them, and eternal praise,
> Who gave us nobler loves and nobler cares."

But they who cannot attain to those heights are not wholly forlorn.

O. B. Frothingham.

SOLUTION.

The poet sang of *God as man:*
The shrivelled sun, the narrowed span
Of heaven's blue, the stagnant streams,
Bereft the hungering sense that ran
To Beauty in his constant dreams.

The poet sang of *man enshrined:*
At once the shadowed ways were lined
With glowing loves, and freedom came
So near him that his soul divined
Its quickening honor and his shame.

The poet sang his grateful strain:
I weary of disunion's stain—
The concord of the high unbars,
As cooing babe the heart of pain,
Our passage upward to the stars!

Horace L. Traubel.

"WHAT SHALL LIBERALS DO WITH THEIR CHILDREN?"

This *is* one of the great problems that confront every parent who has awakened to a consciousness of the great trend of things in these later days. How can it be solved? Let it have the wisest thought and deepest consideration of both editor and contributors in succeeding numbers of The New Ideal. And then may we not hope that the thought will embody itself in some practical system of activity, that shall prove to be an answer to this important question?

What do liberals *wish* for their children? What impulse, what ideals, what views of life would they implant in these young lives, that shall prove to be the controlling power and ruling motive as they go out from them and enter upon the life of self-direction? The question as stated implies that liberals have a higher ideal of life than others. If it were not so the actualities of the world would suffice as regards methods of doing for their children. They see pretty clearly that the true progress of the world hereafter is, in the very nature of things, to be along the line of mental development and culture, rather than in the acquirement of mere material possessions; that, in accordance with the fundamental and constitutional laws of the universe, the time is coming when intellectual possessions will be, must be, the end and object of life to an extent vastly beyond the present popular standard. With this sentiment I fully agree. It is time that, in this great country of ours, an "aristocracy" of intellect should take the place of the present low and baser standard. When *mental* wealth shall become the criterion by which an individual's position in society shall be fixed, rather than that of material possessions or an expert knowledge of society etiquette, then the world will have made advancement along the line of true progress.

Nevertheless, I am impressed with the idea that even this is not the highest ideal. When the good time comes that lies in the background of idealism, there will be no aristocracy of material wealth, nor of intellectual possessions merely; but an aristocracy of *well doing, of righteous living, of love, kindness, generosity, helpfulness.* Then if it be our ambition to out-do our neighbor, to build a little higher or broader than he has done, we certainly shall do *him* no harm. Beyond the mere possession of knowledge lies the still higher plane of *knowing how to live;* how to transform the tower of intelligence into a beacon-light that shall not only penetrate the enveloping darkness but be a guide to the safe harbor of the higher life. This would seem to be a truer ideal of our creation, the highest ideal of human society,—the *spiritual* realm, to which humanity is slowly but surely tending. This does not ignore the intellectual stage. It does not disparage even the animal stage of personal or race history. It should be viewed rather as the natural sequence, the culmination, of both the animal and intellectual stages; each as legitimate, and as divine too, if you please, as the other. The highest is reached only by *passing through* the other stages. Experience in living, and knowledge of the universe, are the two great school-masters that graduate us into the freedom of real existence.

There is a science of almost everything in this world but that of life, or true and high living. It has been claimed that the churches are, and have been, exercising this grand function. If this were so, there would be no significance to the question under consideration. It seems to us, on the other hand, that the churches are more devoted to dogma than to the science of life; that they aim to "convert souls" in a technical sense, or to build up a particular church, or system of doctrine, while the infinitely wider realm of *life*, in its full and complete sense, is left relatively untouched. A technical religion is vastly inferior to *life*. It is true, no doubt, that there can be no full, rounded, complete life that is not religious; but a great deal that is called religion is so technical, narrow, cold and exclusive as to be practically lifeless and inoperative, defeating its own professed ends.

Now, the impression is resistless, in my own mind, that our children need to have implanted in their minds, first of all, a grand, high, sublime conception; a conception that is the resultant of an apprehension of the universe as the embodiment of the Divine. Secondly, they need to be awakened to a deep consciousness of the fact that *they* are *really alive*, and *therefore allied to* the "All," the whole universe, in the very nature and essence of a *common being*. They need

this, it is to be suggested, as a matter of the highest practical importance. With such a consciousness as the bed-rock of daily and hourly outlook, it would seem that a *passion for right living* would be sure to follow. It would sooner or later inevitably dawn upon their minds that even self-interest demands that their lives be directed along the lines of harmony with the laws of the universe, with which they are environed on every side.

The fundamental basis upon which rests the chief lack, in the vast proportion of the human race, seems to be an almost entire *unconsciousness* of the deeper meaning and realities of life. This is especially true regarding our young men and women. When the ideals of life, the ends for which life is spent, are no higher than amusement, fashion, dress, society (so called), and all similar superficial, frivolous and unsatisfactory pursuits, what can be expected other than that life shall be unfruitful of all that, to one of deeper insight, appears to be of vastly greater importance? I would not be understood as holding a view of life that would banish or prohibit "fun" and innocent amusement, or the full and free exercise of the animal functions of our young life. "The chrysalis stage has its divine right to be, as much as any other." It is not forgotten that a child is first born into an animal world, and that it has a nature-given right to remain there for a proper length of time. Amusement, fun, recreation, are perfectly legitimate, a requisite part, even, of every well-rounded, healthy life. But the point that may be worthy of consideration is this: May they not be wisely led, or influenced, along certain lines that shall serve a double purpose?—lines that shall afford all these and, at the same time, be highly educative? I fully believe it to be possible to so interest the young in certain healthy activities as to occupy all their time and leave little room for mischief. I mean that class of activities which shall afford full play for a high order of amusement,—which they will soon learn to enjoy more than a lower order,—while, at the same time, an interest is necessarily being awakened and developed in questions that relate to the basal principles of all life; principles that underlie the whole world of being. Get them really interested in something that necessarily leads to thought, study and investigation, and they will soon come to a recognition of the fact that time spent on the street, or in worse places, is time not well spent. Other and better things have stronger attraction for them. A microscope, a telescope, a piano, or a manikin even, is cheaper than a billiard-table with its usual surroundings. Time personally given by the parent to his children, in the presenting of lessons in astronomy, botany, and similar matters, is, to say the least, in its results much more satisfactory to the parent than the paying of fines in the police courts or of doctor's bills for youthful indiscretions.

To sum it all up, we wish for our children high and grand ideals of life; an ever progressive apprehension of the Universe in which they find themselves and of which they themselves are a part; and thus a growing consciousness of the deep and far-reaching meaning of existence. Once the possessors of these ideals there will be little room for the mere superficialities and frivolities of life, that occupy so large a part of the time and attention of both old and young at the present day.

If, now, the question be: *How* shall liberals "do" these things for their children?—it would seem to be pretty clear that this is a kind of charity that should begin, first of all, *at home*. If we ourselves possess an extended outlook, a deep insight, and a broad view of life as a grand and comprehensive whole; if *our own* inner being is stored with the radiancy of a divine life, it will all be projected or embodied in such a manner as to form an atmosphere that shall be both creative and sustaining, and from which the root and leaf of younger life may find all the requsites for a noble superstructive. Beyond this I can see no other way than the formation of some organic effort that shall be a substitute for the actualities commonly existing all about us. Perhaps Prof. Adler, and Mr. Chadwick and Dr. Janes, and others, are beginning to answer this question for us in the most practical manner possible. There is great power in organized effort, in the massing or focalization of individual forces. But even here an indispensible requisite seems to be "an exalted, magnetic personality," who constitutes in himself "the Chorus of Divinity, which, in the great Drama of Humanity, guides and interprets the feelings and sympathies of other souls and thus adjusts their attitude towards the divine."

After all, liberals should be the last to lose faith and trust in the "Eternal Order" of the universe. They should remember that "Time is but the stream" their children "go a-fishing in," and that there is little danger of the children of any *real liberal* becoming permanently imprisoned by contact with the "teachings" of any sect or class that represents "a standing misrepresentation of modern knowledge."

C. T. Stockwell.

"WHAT SHALL LIBERALS DO WITH THEIR CHILDREN?"

This is, in my opinion, one of the most if not the most pressing and important question that can be asked. The children of to-day are to be the men and women of to-morrow. Their education has everything to do with their own well-being and their influence in the future. That which was said of the Sunday School in the February New Ideal is quite correct and not a bit too strongly stated. One would think "Unitarians" would know better than to permit the teaching of much that is current in their Sunday Schools. All the superstition taught there must some day be unlearned. It is a shame that children are permitted to imbibe the ideas that are soberly—I cannot say honestly—given out in these schools. "Oh," it is sometimes said, "it will do no harm; the children will unlearn it all, some day." Unlearn it all! It is an imposition on the young mind, an outrage and an insult, to fill it with mythical and time-old legends that sometime must necessarily be proven false.

No one has a right to teach, or permit to be taught, to the young mind, superstition in any sense whatever, when its real nature is known. Look abroad, and see the result of such teaching,—craven, cowardly men worshiping and holding to fetiches that make the emancipated soul blush for his race; cringing, crawling, kneeling before an imaginary three-headed monster who is all ready to plunge them into a "lake of fire and brimstone" unless they say, "I believe."

True, "Unitarians" do not teach *that*. But they still hold too strongly to many old traditions. The writer had charge of a class of eight bright boys in a Unitarian Sunday School one Sunday not long since, in the absence of the regular teacher. "How does your teacher teach?" was asked of one of the wide-awake lads. "Oh," he replied, "she reads to us from the Bible,"—at the same time handing a Bible to the substitute teacher. "And what does she read about?" was further asked. "About loaves and fishes, how Lazarus was raised from the dead, about Jesus walking on the water, and such like," was the reply. "Well, we won't have any fables to-day at any rate," I said, "in the Bible, or out," and the Bible was set aside, and those eight darling boys had another and a different lesson from the usual course.

Now, why should not Rationalists teach rationalism? Why not teach science simplified, instead of harping upon the "Nature of Sin," the "Holy Ghost," the "Perfect Man," or any other two thousand years old misconception? Certainly I would not make light of sacred or serious things. But, to my mind, these are not sacred or serious. Far from it. The child is of more value than all the creeds and dog-

namely, as had been used by Abraham against the kings of Palestine and Egypt, by Jacob against Esau and Laban, by Moses against Pharaoh, and by David against the Philistines who had given him hospitality. These were all holy men, after God's own heart. Their pious frauds are nowhere blamed in Scripture. Had not God himself commanded the Hebrews in Egypt to borrow jewels, and not to return them? Had he not sent a lying spirit to entice Ahab to be slain? Had not even Jesus pretended that he wished to journey further than Emmaus? And had he not deceived not only the Jews, but the Romans, by concealing his divinity? If he had answered their questions truthfully, they would not have dared to crucify him; and then we should all be still in sin, and without hope of salvation. So, again, we find Paul saving himself from being put to death for preaching Christianity, by passing himself off on the Jews as a Pharisee. He even boasts that he is all things to all men, and that he has been crafty, and caught his converts with guile. Nowhere does the Bible forbid pious fraud. Christians are prohibited from telling lies to each other, especially should they beware of deceiving a priest, lest they perish like Ananias and Sapphira: neither fraud nor force should be used by Christian against Christian; but both are perfectly allowable means of propagating the true faith against heathen and unbelievers. When the church has found force inconvenient, she has always used fraud without scruple. Witness the many heads of John the Baptist, the burning of Huss and Joan of Arc, the silencing of Galileo, and so on.

The preacher had barely entered on this branch of the subject, however, when he became plainly hoarse, and the bishop, who had but just begun to listen eagerly, sent out for a glass of water. Scarcely had it been brought in when there was a cry of "Fire" in the street. Then the bishop arose and commanded the congregation to depart quietly, with his benediction. They obeyed promptly, and in safety, for they were met and followed by priests who assured them that it was only a false alarm. No one mentioned why it was given; but the lecture was never finished. The lecturer was packed off to a little factory village,—and the umbrella was taken away by a reporter.

The general instructions to this reporter, from newspaper headquarters, were to be as sensational as possible; but no sooner had he taken hold of the umbrella than he became, like all its other possessors, more consistent than ever before. And what came of it? Scarcely had his next news-reports been printed when he was told that he must leave in a week, and that in the meantime he must not continue his regular work but would be employed as a clerk in the advertising department!

Among the notices handed to him that afternoon, over the counter, was one offering a liberal reward for the very umbrella which he had taken away from the chapel in which he heard the lecture. The address given was that of the doctor of divinity, and the ex-reporter called at once, hoping possibly to hear of some new opening. He was delighted to find that the old gentleman, in his proposed departure to Europe, wished to take with him a private secretary and travelling companion; and the young man's knowledge of French secured him the post. The salary was small, but it might lead to something better, especially as the pretty daughter concluded, at the last moment, to join the party. This young lady had hardly seen the umbrella, which the young man had returned, before she was so much pleased with its curious workmanship that she was glad to hear from her father that the polite loaner had just sent a note, expressing his regret at being obliged to leave before he could call, and his hope that the doctor would retain this trifling acknowledgement of the profit gained by all who heard his sermons. Soon after, they sailed.

The young lady (whose name was Clara) had made it her mission in life to spread the knowledge of Emerson and Browning. Her attempt, on board ship, to interest the surgeon of the steamer in her favorites was not a success, as he cared too much for science, and was then on his way to Paris to prepare for a professorship in Chemistry which had been promised him in a Presbyterian college. She was all the more delighted, after this repulse, to find an easy convert in the secretary, who proved as fond as she was of the love poems in *Men and Women*, and was never tired of praising such passages in Emerson as tell us to plant ourselves, each on his instincts, and there abide indomitably, to "obey the Genius then most when his impulse is wildest"; always to do what we are afraid to do, to think no law sacred but that of one's own nature, and to reject all popular standards, even the voice of the great and good.

She had never noticed, in connection with such urgings as the above, how careful Emerson is, even at the risk of seeming inconsistent, to avoid encouraging all base and low desires. She knew not of the existence in Boston of any instincts or impulses not good enough to follow boldly and confidently. How could she imagine that she was giving her pupil the worst possible preparation for meeting Parisian harpies? Moreover, how could she imagine that, even on board the steamer, her quotations, often repeated, were working in him, all untrained and unbalanced as he was intellectually and morally, the idea that even she herself might become his lawful prize? She did see, however, as day after day passed, that apparently he was becoming much attached to her; and her keen wit led her to foresee that soon,—possibly almost at any time,—he might make an open proposal for her hand. Now, no regard simply for prudence would have restrained her from giving him her love, but, fortunately, the spell of the umbrella, once in his possession, was still upon him, and by it he was made so consistent that continually he revealed himself in character as he was. His innate coarseness, at first concealed, began to show out. Her delicacy was shocked at the stories he brought her from the smoking-room, and her love of justice made her indignant at his ridicule of the devotion with which the young surgeon took care of the sick passengers in the steerage. She saw enough of both the men to feel sure that the one who never sought her company was more worthy of her, should it ever come to that, than he who was trying to win her; and her heart was still her own, when her father told her, soon after reaching Paris, that his secretary had formed such bad habits that he had been obliged to discharge him. She had, however, grown so lukewarm in proselyting, that she wrote these words in her diary: "Religions save our souls, just as pins are said to save our lives, owing to our not swallowing them." FRED. MAY HOLLAND.

[To be continued.]

CHILD-CULTURE.

MODERN science and philosophy have put a new interpretation upon human nature and events. Children are born into a world modified by new ideas and influences. Leading minds are now competent to compare differing theories and practices of the past and give a better welcome and education to new-born generations. We are discovering that neither the crying nor the laughing philosophy can do justice to the facts of life. Tragedy and comedy are to live on good terms with each other. Children are learning that the world is neither a penitentiary nor a play-house, a fleeting show nor a state of probation. They are not cowed down with fear and gloom, nor careless of obligation and consequences. So far as unhealthy seriousness and concern are engendered by false representations of a vindictive deity, infinite guiltiness and impending endless punishment, our young friends may be congratulated on their exemption from such a state of mind. They do not, however, scoff and deride the need of a careful attention to the duties and responsibilities of domestic, social and business life. They

soon find, by experience, that the way of transgressors is hard, and the way of obedience to natural laws a thousand times better for themselves and mankind. The momentous questions of good and evil are safely brought to the test of experienced pleasure and pain, and not to fixed and arbitrary revelations. We may safely say to our children, you will suffer for doing wrong even more than those do who evidently suffer from your wrong-doing; but we need not exaggerate their sinfulness or the consequences of it. The best way to make ourselves and others ashamed of wrong-doing, and in earnest to reform, is by demonstration and not by condemnation. They who sit in darkness would never know how foolish they were to continue in it, if they never realized the superior advantages of light.

The new education is characterized by a better understanding of the nature and workings of the instincts, the passions, the affections, the moral and intellectual faculties, requiring instruction, sympathy, cherishing, directing and cultivating.

Some think the old regime has the advantage of deeper sensibility of the sinfulness of sin, of the ingratitude and woful condition of the world at large, and shows more actual interest in religious organizations than the new. It may be so, but if it is, it is owing to the undeveloped stage of the new. Zeal to save multitudes from an improbable doom may appear more real and earnest than zeal to save the world from ignorance, disease, remorse and crime; but when the unspeakable happiness of virtue in all its applications to daily life, and the unspeakable unhappiness of vice in all its bearings upon present and future generations, shall be adequately realized, the new religious institutions will exhibit an earnestness and a reality unparalleled in the history of the race, and child-culture will be free from existing defects.

There is something wrong both in a system of supernaturalism on the one hand and of rigid secularism on the other. Religion is of human origin just as much as science, art and literature; but it will always recognize the distinction between the finite and the infinite. Children should be indoctrinated in tenets concerning the infinite as well as in those which pertain to finite relations. Our objection to creeds is that most of them are not true, and also that they are made ends instead of means. Our children should be taught, in a rational way, that the whole universe manifests itself as apparently the outcome of infinite power, order and beneficence, so that whatever happens will ultimate in universal welfare. This conception of overruling beneficence they ought to have, to inspire them to use all their powers for the universal good. The *name* of this overruling, all-upholding infinite is not of so much importance as confidence in its spirit, character, and administration. Perhaps the word God may be a misleading one, and will be dismissed as too limited and damaged; and perhaps personality, self-consciousness, will not be predicated of the absolute existence. But it would be cruel to childhood to omit all religious instruction on the ground of past mistakes and injuries.

Reverence, Conscientiousness, Wonder, Ideality, must and will be more or less active in the season of childhood and youth, and should be enlightened and directed by competent teachers, to divert most direful consequences and to secure life-long advantages. Free Religionists, not being satisfied with any existing schools for this purpose, are in a dilemma, and thousands of children are deprived of the life-long strength and comfort alone to be found in communion with the infinite. This calamity is partly lessened by the increased attention to cultivating benevolence or philanthropy in churches and schools of every denomination, but the relations of the finite to the finite can never take the place of the relations of the finite to the infinite, or of the infinite to the finite. The diffused action of the infinite omnipresent in the universe of matter and of man does not extinguish the distinction between the infinite and finite. Morality and Philanthropy deal legitimately with finite beings, while religion, for the sake of definition, deals with the infinite in mutual relations with the finite, and has not yet met with results satisfactory to a large class called free religionists or liberals. Our children are waiting for a more perfect and successful culture of their religious, moral and philanthropic capacities.

Wm. G. Babcock.

"WHO CONDEMNED JESUS TO DEATH?"

The February New Ideal contains a short article in which Mr. F. M. Holland — though desirous of being fair to the Jews — nevertheless comes to the conclusion that it was the Jews that killed Jesus. This conclusion seems to me not sufficiently supported by the argument. If in Paul's statement to the Thessalonians the word "killed" is to be taken literally in reference to "Jesus," it must also be taken so in reference to "the prophets"; but Paul, who was certainly perfectly familiar with the Old Testament, knew well that they killed only some, and by no means all prophets. This passage therefore ought not to be taken literally. It is undoubtedly true that some Jews had an influence in the persecution and death of Jesus, but these were the "mob," who cried "Crucify him!" Nor is the passage quoted from the epistle to the Galatians to be taken literally, since Jesus was *crucified*, while Paul's own quotation from Deut. xxi, 23, refers to persons who were *hanged*. Moreover, these words of Paul have the same force for the "faithful" Christian, no matter by whom Jesus was executed.

Some time ago a pamphlet fell into my hands, containing an essay by Dr. Ludwig Philippson, published in Berlin, 1866, "*Haben wirklich die Juden Jesum gekreuzigt?*" from which I wish to offer a few statements.

From passages of the Old Testament and of old Jewish historians the author proves that crucifixion was a mode of capital punishment never practised by the Jews. And from secular history we know that it was frequently practised by the Romans.

The only authority we have for the mode and circumstances of Jesus' death are the gospels; for the passage in Josephus referring to it is quite evidently a later interpolation. But the gospels are so little in harmony with each other as to the details that this subjects their authority to a doubtful acceptation.

The gospels name Caiaphas as high priest at the time, but the Rabbis, the historians of that time, know no high priest of that name, but name Josephus as holding that position during the reign of Pilate, he being afterwards deposed by Vitellius, the successor of Pilate.

However great may have been the influence of the priests upon the people,— even outside of purely religious matters, — the criminal jurisdiction was entirely in the hands of the Romans, who had good reason to make an end of Jesus' activity; for the cry "Hosanna to the son of David: Blessed is he that cometh in the name of the Lord," was still ringing in their ears; and Jesus was not the only religious and national reformer of the time. "Many partial risings had taken place here and there in Judæa, ... and had been suppressed by the Romans with inexorable severity."

I may add that with unwonted agreement all four gospels state that a superscription was fastened on the cross, calling Jesus "The King of the Jews." The friends and followers of Jesus were certainly not the authors of this superscription, for it is added that this was his "accusation." The enemies of Jesus among the Jews would not have written it, except in derision and irony; and they were certainly too cautious to venture such a malignant jest publicly, where it might be misunderstood by the ignorant mass and bring danger to themselves. Moreover, the Romans

would not have allowed the Jews to meddle in the proceedings and raise such a superscription. But, coming from the Romans, it was readily understood by all Jews as a warning: "Behold what you achieve by your rebellious attempts!"

E. C. F. KRAUSS.

TESTIMONY THE BASIS OF HISTORY.

MR. GLADSTONE, in his elaborate review of "Robert Elsmere" in the *Nineteenth Century*, criticises the author for not making plain the process of argument or evidence by which Squire Wendover works so great a change in the convictions, and consequently in the life of her hero. It is true that only intimations are given on this important point, and that the mere novel-reader is likely to miss seeing them. Nevertheless, the explanation is there, and it may be worth while to point out the successive steps of it, since even Mr. Gladstone fails to recognize them.

Under the Oxford influences, Elsmere was passing from a bright, buoyant lad into a man, and a man of ardor and conviction; and the chief instrument in the transformation was Mr. Grey. This influence was so strong that under it Elsmere paid less attention to those classical and mathematical studies which his tutor, Mr. Langham, recommended, and applied himself rather to that most overwhelming of all interests, the interest of religion. Grey had made him "earnest."

Grey had broken with the popular Christianity, but for him God, conscience, duty, remained realities, and indeed were the only realities. None of the various forms of materialist thought escaped his challenge; no genuine utterance of the spiritual life of man but was sure of his sympathy. And Elsmere took in all that Grey had to give, and drank in all the ideal fervor and spiritual enthusiasm of the great tutor.

When about to leave Oxford, Elsmere tells Mr. Grey, "I have lately made up my mind to take Orders."

"You feel no difficulties in the way?" Mr. Grey asks.

"No," said Robert eagerly, "I never had any. Perhaps," he added, with a sudden humility, "it is because I have never gone deep enough."

Some time later, when Elsmere had entered on his rectorship, Langham said to him, "There is one thing that doesn't seem to have touched you yet. But you will come to it. To my mind, it makes almost the chief interest of history. It is just this. History depends on *testimony*. What is the nature and the value of testimony at given times? In other words, did the man of the third century understand, or report, or interpret facts in the same way as the man of the nineteenth? And if not, what are the differences, and what are the deductions to be made from them, if any?"

"Ah, well," said the rector, smiling, "I am only just coming to that. As I told you, I am only now beginning to dig for myself. Till now, it has all been work at second hand. I have been getting a general survey of the ground as quickly as I could with the help of other men's labors. Now, I must go to work inch by inch, and find out what the ground is made of. I won't forget your point. It is enormously important, I grant — enormously," he repeated, reflectively.

"I should think it is," said Langham to himself, as he rose; "the whole of orthodox Christianity is in it, for instance."

Being thus mentally prepared for critical investigation, especially with regard to the amount and quality of testimony, Elsmere is brought by circumstances into intimacy with Squire Wendover, a man whose taste has led him for many years into thorough investigation of the subjects then occupying Elsmere's mind,— namely, theology and church history,— and whose wealth has enabled him to collect in his library everything relating to those subjects. The Squire not only makes Elsmere welcome to the use of these literary treasures in general, but selects and sends to his house the very works which had most recently and most thoroughly dealt with the matters in question.

These, I believe, are the only intimations which the author of Robert Elsmere gives of the causes and methods of that change of mind which led her hero to leave the Church of England, and to reject some of the chief articles of its creed. Are these hints meagre and insufficient to explain the change? May not thorough scrutiny of testimony change the conclusions which, having been adopted in a credulous and uncritical age, have been embalmed in creeds, and have thus remained stationary, like flies in amber, while all other matters have undergone modification through intelligent inquiry? Perhaps it may be useful to try how impartial criticism might so apply itself to one of the dogmas of the English church as to compel Robert Elsmere to relinquish what Mr. Gladstone and his fellow churchmen still confidingly hold to.

Why, for instance, do they hold to the supernatural conception of Jesus of Nazareth?

It is safe to say that they assume it in consequence of statements in the Gospels "according to" Matthew, "according to" Luke, and "according to" John. The last of these documents repeatedly declares that Jesus was "the only begotten son of God," and the two former give details positively affirming that, though Mary was his mother, God, and not Joseph, was his father.

It is everywhere taken for granted in the New Testament that all men are children of God; but it is also distinctly declared in the books above named that God has only one "begotten" son, namely, Jesus. When we read that Abraham begat Isaac, and that Isaac begat Jacob, we accept the statement as a fact, and see no reason for calling it in question. It accords not only with the testimony of history but with all our experience at the present day, that men are the fathers of children. But when we read in Greek and Roman literature that Zeus or Jupiter was the father of a child borne by a woman, we promptly and confidently reject the story as incredible. Why do we believe in the former case while we deny in the latter? The answer to this question may be clearer if we first inquire why the Greeks and Romans believed, and why we disbelieve, the divine paternity of Hercules. They believed it because they were taught it from their childhood upward as an unquestionable fact by the ministers of religion, and because the authors of their literature repeated the same thing with corroborative details. We disbelieve it because, *not* having been taught that it *must* be believed as a truth of religion, we are free to use reason in regard to it; and reason tells us, first, that evidence must be more full, definite and trustworthy in proportion to the improbability of the thing in question, and, next, that the divine paternity of Hercules was founded on priestly tradition only, and never had a particle of genuine evidence in its favor.

In like manner, the populations of Christian countries believe Jesus of Nazareth to be a begotten son of God because, having been taught from their childhood by the ministers of religion that such belief is a religious duty, and that the corroborative details in regard to it in Matthew, Luke and John are divinely inspired records, and having found these theories accepted and echoed in the literature of their respective countries, they have accepted them with credulous docility, and have abstained both from asking for real evidence of them and from exercising their reason with regard to them.

Daring individuals, all along through the centuries of the Christian era, have ventured to question these theories, and many have suffered martyrdom as the result of such questioning. But since advancing civilization has prevented the infliction of death for heresy, more people have ventured to inquire into the origin of theological dogmas and the evidence on which they were founded. Within the

last half-century the number of such inquirers has greatly increased; and the results of their investigations are appearing more frequently in the popular literature of Holland, Germany, France, England and the United States. In the present year, the wide-spread interest shown in two works of fiction dealing with dogmas of the popular theology has compelled recognition of them by the organs of religious as well as secular education. The review of "Robert Elsmere" by Mr. Gladstone has given fresh impetus to the circulation of that work, and the inconclusive character of his criticism can hardly fail to promote its influence.

I have said that the church's confident assumption of the divine paternity of Jesus rests upon certain statements in the Gospels. Keeping in view that the credibility of history depends upon testimony, and that evidence must be full, minute, and trustworthy in proportion to the improbability of the matter in question, let us inquire whether the Gospel assertions above referred to give adequate reason for believing that Jesus was the *begotten* son of God.

These narratives are said to be "according to" Matthew, Luke and John. This expression may mean either that they were written by those persons, or that some unnamed writer had subsequently recorded the traditions popularly understood to be handed down from them. Which of those meanings is the appropriate one is a question to be decided by evidence. It is therefore a matter of the highest importance to inquire by whom, and at what dates, those narratives were given to the early Christians.

On all hands it is admitted that the date of the three narratives in question is uncertain, and that the closest inquiry can make out only an approximation to it. Within the last fifty years there has been more attention paid to this subject than ever before, and the facilities for determining it have also been greater; and yet the varieties of opinion among scholars of equal competence and equal candor have been greater than ever. Different critics conjecture that the first Gospel may have been written about A.D. 37, or 59, or 90, or 105, or 180: that the third may have been written about 59, or 64, or after 100, or after 115, or 170: and that the fourth may have been written about 78, after 95, before 150, about 150, and probably 178. It is noteworthy that the later of these critics, whose advantages for forming a correct opinion have been greatest, incline to the later of the dates above mentioned.

If we accept these later dates of the writing of the Gospels, offered by the later criticism, as probably nearer the fact, the mixture of supernatural and historical which they contain is fully accounted for. If three unknown individuals, confidently holding the traditions attributed to Matthew, Luke and John, wrote down in the second century narratives "according to" those early Christian teachers, that is to say, the statements and the ideas then *popularly ascribed* to them, we must of course expect to find in their narratives the credulity belonging to the period, the ideas inherited from Old Testament mythology, and the inaccuracy inevitable after so long delay. Such records cannot warrant belief in statements utterly improbable in themselves and unsupported by other testimony.

If, on the other hand, we adopt the earlier of the conjectured dates, and suppose that Matthew himself wrote his idea of the parentage of Jesus from 37 to 60 years after his birth, that Luke himself wrote concerning the same event from 58 to 64 years after it, and that John wrote his opinion respecting it from 78 to 95 years after, how could those beliefs on their part substantiate an utterly improbable event so distant in time, so destitute of corroborative testimony, and so absolutely beyond the possibility of their personal knowledge, as that Jesus was begotten by God?

Moreover, if we consider that in one of those same Gospels the testimony of Mary herself, the only competent witness, directly contradicts the statements on which the popular assumption is founded, there can be no doubt that her evidence must outweigh theirs. Mary certainly knew who was the father of her child.

The writer of the narrative "according to" Luke tells us that, on their return from Jerusalem, whither they had taken Jesus at the age of twelve years, Joseph and Mary missed him, and, returning to the temple, found him in debate with the doctors. Mary then said to him, Son, why hast thou thus dealt with us? Behold, *thy father* and I have sought thee sorrowing. But he replied, How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business? *And they understood not the saying.* They understood it not, because Mary evidently knew Joseph to be the father of her child, and neither Mary nor Joseph knew anything of any other father.

The evidence upon which Jesus is assumed to be God, or even the *begotten* son of God, would not for a moment be accepted as competent to establish such a statement as fact in any modern court of justice.

Though thorough scrutiny of the creeds had shown Elsmere that he could not remain in the English church, and though he so realized the difference between his latter and his former faith as to say "We must have a new religion," it is only just to him to emphasize the fact that his change, instead of chilling enthusiasm and devotion, intensified in him the sense of responsibility, reverence, and eagerness to give help, spiritual and material, to those within his reach who most needed it. It seems perfectly accordant with this attitude of mind on his part that his new Society should be named "The Brotherhood of Jesus," according to his first idea. Why this name was afterwards changed to "The Brotherhood of Christ," and why Elsmere continues to use the word Christ as an appropriate name for Jesus, are points which seem to need explanation.

CHARLES K. WHIPPLE.

BOOK REVIEWS.

The Coming Creed of the World. Is there not a Faith more Sublime and Blissful than Christianity? By Frederick Gerhard, Philadelphia: W. H. Thompson, Publisher. Pages, 526. $1.25.

Certainly Mr. Gerhard gives us an earnest book; the book of a student, a thinker, a lover of the best. And if there is something of a sublime egotism in the implication which he makes, both in the title of his work and in his subject-matter, that there is no question of his Creed really being *the* Creed to which we and all the world must come, still there is probably enough of truth and "availability" in what he gives us, and in what he gleans for us in all lands and literatures, to make his book valuable, suggestive, an actual prognostication of *something* better, and truly (as he himself says of it) "a voice crying in the wilderness." It is a voice, moreover, crying far and wide: besides the American edition, a Danish translation has been published in Copenhagen, a French one is about to be issued in Brussels, an Italian translation is in preparation at Turino, and a German edition at Berlin. And certainly the author shows abundant evidence why the interrogation in his sub-title is to be answered affirmatively. Yes, Mr. Gerhard, we believe with you: not in all points, true; but in this: that there *is* "a faith more sublime and blissful than Christianity." And you are helping to bring it to pass.

God and Man: A Philosophical Inquiry into the Principles of Religion. By Rev. Henry Truro Bray, M.A., B.D., L.L.D. St. Louis: Holt Publishing Co., 1888. Pages, 270. $2.00.

Here is another man who is sure he has the absolute and unadulterated truth of the universe. And we are not prepared to say he has not largely the truth. Our limited space forbids any extended analysis of the work. We must content ourselves, where we would willingly say much and quote much, by remarking that the book is, in all respects, from its point of view, thorough and painstaking. It is wonderfully erudite also; it abounds in welcome and gratifying quotations from ancient and modern philosophers, saviours, and saints, both Christian and "heathen": and for real religious insight and ethical stimulation we seem to feel, as we read, that the "pagan" writers somehow are, in most things, superior to the "Christian" writers. Naturally so, perhaps: for the pagans were, in general, thinkers, searchers, educated, competent to speak: *they*, for *their times*, were the "M.A.'s, B.D.'s and L.L.D.'s," though no "colleges" or "seminaries" had bestowed on them "diplomas." And the Christian writers, for the most part,

— the New Testament writers, at any rate,— who were they? Of them all, the identity of Paul alone is certain; and if even he, at times, what with his Judaism and his Phariseeism, and the growing Gnosticism of his time, and his own abundant exaggerated rhetoric and hyperpole, was not often a good deal "mixed," then — well, at any rate, if he had written as a teacher of eternal truth should write, commentators and scholars to-day would easier know what he meant or thought he meant. The pagan writers are generally clearly conscious of what they are saying, and even common mortals need no learned and exhaustive criticism to comprehend their message. This book is highly valuable for its quotations alone. And as a whole it is a mentally stimulating and spiritually exalting book. From first to last we are borne forward on it as from the deep sea on a harbor-bound tide. It is pure and good, even if its "theology" may not, all of it, stand the test of the coming years. No one can read it and not be helped and strengthened by it.

Girard's Will and Girard College Theology. By R. B. Westbrook, D.D., LL.D. Published by the author, Philadelphia, 1888.

Within a few years, at Andover, Massachusetts, there have been growing a desire and an attempt to broaden a religion that was intended to be narrow. At Girard College, in Philadelphia, there have been, from the first, a desire, an illegal intention, and (through a petty subterfuge) a successful endeavor, to narrow a religion that was intended to be broad. At Andover, there is good reason and good law why the broadness should not be permitted. The whole business of the School there should cease, every honest teacher should flee from it, and the buildings and funds should revert to the heirs of the original donors. This would be the common sense of the matter. The world has outgrown Andover. But at Girard College there is no good reason, either in law or ethics, why the narrowness should not be made to cease, and the school be permitted to go on in the manner intended by its founder. This matter of the Girard College government will not be long, now, we feel, in reaching such desirable and right phase in its history. Many morality-lovers are taking the matter up. If "religion" *cannot* be moral, so much the more evident reason why Girard was right in shutting it out! And every review, every pamphlet, every editorial, and perhaps especially every book like this of Mr. Westbrook's, treating the topic, helps to bring justice more quickly to the memory and intent of Girard. In this little volume of 183 pages is comprised an unbiased, comprehensive setting-forth of the whole ecclesiastical fraud as at present continuously perpetrated in connection with the Girard trust, and in an appendix are given Girard's will in full, together with the Supreme Court's opinion on the validity of that will. A frontispiece presents a portrait of Girard.

PERIODICALS.

The Kindergarten, Chicago, illustrated monthly magazine, $2.00 a year, Alice B. Stockham, editor. There are a great many weeklies coming to us that we think would do more good (or less harm) in the world if they were monthlies. But here is one monthly that ought to be a weekly. And we judge this *practically*, from the number of homes in which mothers and children, every few days, unite in the question, "Is the *Kindergarten* come yet?" "Isn't it about time for the next *Kindergarten*?"— even though the number for the month may have been in the house but a day or two, and three weeks at least must elapse before the next issue. The Kindergarten stories and "typical lessons," however, furnish ample material in each number for the little ones' minds and fingers during a month, and in this and its numerous other valuable features the worth of the periodical to modern progressive child-life can hardly be overestimated. A sample copy may be had free.

The Freethinkers' Magazine, Buffalo, N. Y. It is always a delight to the eye to look at this magazine; and it is seldom there is any lack in the value of the contents. The February number continues the illustrations of prominent freethought workers, and is especially interesting to THE NEW IDEAL, since it gives the portrait of Capt. Robt. C. Adams, one of our own contributors. Those who enjoyed "Something Better" (better than "Christianity"), in our February number, so much that we have been obliged to put it into a leaflet for "missionary" work, should send 20 cents to the above *Magazine* at Buffalo, for the issue of which we are speaking, and 2 cents to us for a copy of the leaflet (or, better, 10 cents for a dozen copies), and, putting the two together, have "Something Better" than they often receive for the same amount.

Fair Play, Valley Falls, Kansas. For a paper advocating some of the "radical" religious, social and industrial "reforms" which *Fair Play* advocates, its editorial tone, so far as we have observed it through a year or more, has invariably been "fair," serious, and sincere,— as the paper's name itself would intimate it always would be. And its work, we think, must tell for good. There must be higher, wider and deeper thought on pressing moral and social questions, wherever *Fair Play* finds a reader. It certainly is not "kid-gloved," nor "tender-footed," but where it strikes there is need of the blow. We wish it had subscribers enough to warrant the doubling of its size. But how, even now, it can be issued as a weekly, and be offered for only 75 cents a year, is a financial puzzle. There must be self-sacrifice in the office and family of the editor of *Fair Play* — as there is in the case of many similar papers whose aim is "missionary work" in behalf of the higher good — the good to be.

Houghton, Mifflin and Co. have announced, for March 1st, an important economic work, "Profit Sharing between Employer and Employee: a study in the Evolution of the Wages System," by Nicholas P. Gilman (editor of the *Literary World*). So far as is known, this will be the first comprehensive work on industrial partnerships in our language. Written in a popular style, Mr. Gilman's work is commended by President F. A. Walker, Carroll D. Wright, R. T. Ely, and other high authorities, as "valuable from both the scientific and the practical points of view." It ought to awaken interest as a discussion of one method for the solution of "labor difficulties."

NOTES.

MRS. UNDERWOOD'S NEW WORK.

WE observe that Mrs. Underwood has lately assumed charge of the "Woman's Department" in *The Religio-Philosophical Journal*. The strength and modern tendency of Mrs. Underwood's thought are revealed at once, even in the titles of the topics she is treating,—"Woman Suffrage and Political Parties," "The Study of Political Economy by Women," etc., etc. The *Journal* is fortunate.

BLUE RELIGION IN BOSTON.

AMONG the "General Topics," in the editorial pages, we speak of Sunday agitation in California. We might have added that there is religious agitation much nearer home. In Faneuil Hall, Boston, Thursday, March 14, there is to be a public meeting to protest against the Blair Bill. Col. T. W. Higginson will preside.

MR. SALTER AT THE LIBERAL UNION CLUB.

ALTHOUGH bearing date of March, THE NEW IDEAL goes to press early enough to announce that at the meeting of the Liberal Union Club, of Boston, Feb. 22, Mr. Wm. M. Salter of the Chicago Ethical Society will be the Essayist,— his subject, "The True Basis of Religious Union." Parker Pillsbury, M. J. Savage, and Rev. Mr. Martin of Chelsea, are expected to follow the paper with discussion.

MR. UNDERWOOD STILL A MISSIONARY.

WE have had inquiries, "Why doesn't Mr. Underwood write something for THE NEW IDEAL?" But Mr. Underwood is in more necessary business, and his every moment is occupied. He is still Missionary to the Christian heathen in the far West, and the deep necessity and arduous duties of such all-important work leave little time for more than the hasty private line or two we occasionally receive from him. But he will be in our columns soon. He is eastbound, the last local papers reporting his lectures hailing from Utah and Colorado, while our February issue left him in California.

THE article by Capt. Robt. C. Adams, in our February issue, "Something Better," has been put into leaflet form at the suggestion of some who think it would be admirable for Liberal "missionary" work. It is printed in the best style, in 4 pages, and is suitable for slipping in a letter. It can be supplied for 60 cents a hundred, 10 cents a dozen, or 2 cents a single copy.

THE London publishers of Mr. Spencer's works, Williams & Norgate, think so well of Mr. Thompson's biographical and descriptive essay, in the Brooklyn Series, that they have ordered the first number of *The Modern Science Essayist* in quantity, for European sale.

"Thread from the fibre of nettles is now spun so fine," says *The Press*, of Florence, Mass., "that sixty miles of it weigh only two and a half pounds." We think this must be the thread of a good many ministers' discourses.

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